

# **The City of Greenbelt Arts Advisory Board Meeting**

April 2, 2013

## **Present:**

Board Members: John Drago, Oliver Gaycken, Mark Granfors-Hunt (Vice Chair), Gale Martineau, Tiahna Nugent, Anna Socrates (Secretary), Shane Wisdom

Members absent with prior notice: Tatiana Ausema (Chair), Ginny Zanner

Members absent without prior notice: Mary Harrison, Cassandra Harper

Staff Liaison: Nicole DeWald

Council Liaison: Konrad Herling

Guest: Molly Lester

Meeting started at 7:04 p.m.

The minutes for the March meeting were approved by acclamation.

No new agenda items were added.

Meeting focus: Meetings with contribution group candidates

## **Greenbelt Arts Center:**

### **representatives Malca Giblin, Sandy Irving, Patricia Evans**

The representatives discussed the group's accomplishments for this year and plans for the upcoming year: Season runs from late summer to middle of calendar year.

- 4 GAC-sponsored plays planned for upcoming season
  - *Avenue Q*
  - *See How They Run*
  - *Come Back to the Five and Dime, Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean*
  - *Habeas Corpus*
- One or possibly two Rude Mechanicals shows.
- Still entertaining inquiries about other possible shows.
- Idea to make more room for guest productions part of the formal decisionmaking process for the GAC season.
- Rethinking mission statement and how to shape season
  - When they did 7 shows per season, there were only a few odd weekends available for other groups.
  - Shift to fewer GAC-produced shows leaves more time for other groups.
- Possibility of doing a survey among members—seeking input on where to prioritize. On productions or becoming a center of community and nurturing new groups.
  - Community support necessary to grow audience.
- New season will see a greater marketing focus
- Capital improvements
  - Restroom renovation finished
  - Grant from Community Foundation to put in push-button doors
  - Working on improving air conditioning and dealing with the condensation issues.
  - Ambition to clean up storage area to make more room available

**Question:** With budgetary tightening and the shortfall in city revenue, what is GAC's plan to cover expenses such as rent?

**Response:** They would try to tighten schedule and bring in more outside groups.

**Question:** What fundraising efforts?

**Response:** Everything GAC does is geared toward fundraising and filling the seats.

### **Alight Dance Theater**

#### **Representative: Angella Foster, with support of Molly Lester**

The representative discussed the group's accomplishments for this year and plans for the upcoming year:

- Alight is still a recognition group. Although City has given them two one-time grants, they are not yet a contribution group.
- Highlights of the year:
  - Two performances of Stargazing, a free show for local schoolchildren from Springhill Lake Elementary and Greenbelt Elementary Schools in conjunction with the Recreation Department's Artward Bound program. Performances included arts and dance workshops.
  - Sneak peek preview at GAC of Stargazing
  - Upcoming June performance of Stargazing at Dance Place (Washington, DC)
- Seeking \$1,000 in funding from the city, which was what they asked for last year. The request is for marketing expenses and costuming, which will be recycled or lent for other projects.
- Funding is for a joint project with CHEARS and the Three Sisters Gardens, to create three site specific works in the different neighborhoods of the city.
  - Celebration of Spring – Greenbelt West, Springhill Lake Recreation Center
  - Greenbelt Day Weekend/Artful Afternoon – City Center, Greenbelt Community Center
  - Fall Fest – Greenbelt East, Schrom Hills Park
- Angella described the joint project with CHEARS venture as an attempt to work with another group to share artistic input and conduct joint fundraising.
- Also applying for a Maryland Heritage State Foundation Grant through the local office. Have received good feedback.
- Other grants do not provide funding for marketing.
  - Producing postcards and flyers are expensive.
  - It is strategic to spend money on marketing, but this is not often covered by other grants.
- Group started in 2010. Excited to have made it this long. Audience is growing and has been supportive during the tough times.
- In past have received support from individual donations, a Kickstarter campaign and silent auctions, Greenbelt Community Foundation, and some corporate matching funds (Freddie Mac).
- Seeking city support also to leverage that support for county and state grants.
  - Reality of situation is that it is harder to get funding at other levels without city stamp of approval.
  - Past projects have cost \$15-20K to produce. Must fundraise all of it. Ticket sales only cover a fraction.

**Question:** Is there a conflict between Angella's role as a part-time city employee versus her role on the Alight Board and her role as artistic director of Alight.

**Response:** Angella not paid for her work with Alight, though Alight pays the guest performing artists. Also there is no specific city rule to prevent an employee from applying for contribution group status, though this might change at an upcoming work session.

Also Alight is a recognition group, but can't use the dance studio for free, which is the only space that Alight can rehearse in, because the studio makes money for the city. Alight receives no benefit from recognition status, other than to be able to apply for contribution group status.

**Question:** Why did Alight only apply for \$1,000?

**Response:** They didn't think they would get more. Request based on past relationship and recognition of the realities of the city's revenue situation.

### **FONDCA (Friends of the New Deal Café Arts)**

**Representatives: Barbara Simon and LeeAnn Irwin**

The representatives discussed the group's accomplishments for this year and plans for the upcoming year:

- Poetry Moment box in Roosevelt Center
  - Working with Greenbelt Writers Group.
  - Box built by local builder
  - Want to change poems and include seasonal works and children's works.
  - Maybe install boxes in other locations
- First-ever Artist Studio Walking Tour (13 artists participated)
  - Hope to increase that this year
  - Do this in the fall—now on an 18-month cycle
- 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Singalong.
- Hand delivering fundraising appeal letters
  - Every year they raise more money.
  - Half of their budget comes from the door-to-door campaign

Funding request is for \$2,500 for expanding new projects and programs  
Had cut children's concerts back to one.

**Question:** there is a decrease in the marketing budget

**Response:** Café Board agreed to pay for this.

**Question:** what about marketing to other parts of the city

**Response:** attempts have been made, but have been met with challenges.

No meeting in May.

Meeting adjourned at 9:09 p.m.

Approved by acclamation: 10/1/2013